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Cannery designated national historic site on 100th birthday

STEVESTON, B.C., June 25, 1994 The national historic significance of the Gulf of Georgia Cannery, located in the fishing community of Steveston, B.C., was officially recognized today during a plaque unveiling ceremony under the auspices of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The commemorative plaque was unveiled by Richmond M.P., Raymond Chan, on behalf of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, the Honourable Michel Dupuy.

The Cannery, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, also officially inaugurated new exhibits that trace the colourful and turbulent history of the West Coast fishing industry.

The story of the Gulf of Georgia Cannery's began in 1894, amidst a booming salmon fishery. Small, wooden fishing boats swarmed over the Fraser River netting the abundant runs of salmon, while Cannery crews worked long, weary hours to keep up with the mountains of sockeye. The Cannery soon expanded to three canning lines, breaking records for packing salmon and earning the nickname of Steveston's "Monster Cannery."

Strong community drive to preserve the Cannery led to the development of the Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society in 1986, which has been involved in running the site, in partnership with Parks Canada. This is one of the first projects where Parks Canada has worked closely with a non-profit society to operate a National Historic Site.

"The Government recognizes that there is a lot of expertise in the community and that the public is demanding more involvement in heritage preservation and presentation," said Mr. Chan. "Such partnerships are also cost-effective strong community support raises private funds for worthwhile activities."

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada advises the Minister of Canadian Heritage on the national historic importance of people, events or places, as well as the architectural interest of heritage buildings.

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